



BLM NEWS

New Mexico Oklahoma Texas Kansas

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Contact: Mary White
(505) 438-7404
mary_white@nm.blm.gov

Secretary Norton Announces New Appointments to BLM Resource Advisory Council in [State]

Interior Secretary Gale Norton announced today the appointment of six members to New Mexico's citizen-based Resource Advisory Council (RAC), which advises the Bureau of Land Management on public land issues.

"I am pleased to announce the appointment of these talented individuals to serve on the New Mexico Resource Advisory Council," Norton said. "These local civic-minded citizens come from a variety of backgrounds, and they embody the very idea that people who live close to the resource are in the best position to provide advice on decisions that affect those resources."

Composed of citizens appointed for their expertise in natural resource issues, the New Mexico Resource Advisory Council aims to improve the health and productivity of the public rangelands in that State. Each RAC provides counsel and advice to the BLM concerning planning and management of the public lands within the RAC's jurisdictional boundary.

State Director Michelle J. Chávez also praised the new appointees. "These appointees demonstrate a good balance among the competing interests on our public lands," Chavez said. "With these new members in place, the Council can continue to provide guidance that strengthens the BLM's ability to make sound resource decisions," Chavez added.

Lt. Governor Bradley stated: "I welcome each of you to the RAC and thank you for your service. Working together here in New Mexico, we will be able to provide critical local input to meet the challenges we face to protect our resources and our cultural heritage. Additionally I would like to thank Interior Secretary Norton for bringing a new spirit of cooperation to this process. The BLM State Director and I agreed on the six nominees and for the first time ever, the entire list was approved by the Secretary."

The six new members named are:

Raye Miller, Artesia, **Joe Stell**, Carlsbad, **Crestina Trujillo-Armstrong**, San Cristobal, representing Category 1: Holders of Federal grazing permits and representatives of energy and mineral development, timber industry, transportation or rights-of-way, off-highway vehicle use, and commercial recreation.

Michael Eisenfeld, Farmington and **Anthony Popp**, Las Cruces representing Category 2:

Representatives of nationally or regionally recognized environmental organizations, archaeological and historic interests, dispersed recreation and wild horse and burro groups.

Gretchen Sammis, Cimarron, representing Category 3: Holders of State, county, or local elected office, employees of a state agency responsible for management of natural resources, members of an Indian Tribe, academicians involved in natural sciences, and the public at large.

The Resource Advisory Council will hold the next meeting at the Sagebrush Inn in Taos on October 3rd and 4th. The meetings are open to the public. The main topic to be discussed will be Off Highway Vehicle use on Public Lands.

The BLM, an agency of the U.S. Department of the Interior, manages more land — 264 million surface acres — than any other Federal agency. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, which gave the BLM its comprehensive mission to manage the public lands for a variety of uses so as to benefit present and future generations. The BLM accomplishes this by managing for such resources as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, and mineral development, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on the public lands. Most of the country's BLM-managed public land is located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. These lands, once remote, now provide the growing communities of the West with open space that gives the region much of its character. The Bureau, which has a budget of \$1.8 billion and a workforce of about 9,000 employees, also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the Nation.

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